

Message Text

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22

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 OMB-01 /092 W

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R 221441Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4535

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 4747

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, SF, NI

SUBJ: IMPACT OF VORSTER VISIT TO ISRAEL

REF : STATE 91610

1. NIGERIAN INFORMATION MEDIA HAVE GIVEN VORSTER'S TRIP TO ISRAEL STRAIGHT BUT LIMITED COVERAGE. IN ONLY COMMENT THUS FAR, /OBSERVER/ RAN BITING EDITORIAL CLAIMING THAT VISIT IS PROOF OF ISRAELI SUPPORT FOR RACISM. LACK OF GOVERNMENT REACTION TO
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DATE SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS APPROVAL OF VISIT, HOWEVER,

FMG HAS ADOPTED A VERY HARD LINE ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES AND WE ARE CERTAIN ISRAEL'S HOSTING OF SOUTH AFRICAN LEADER HAS NOT GONE UNNOTICED BY POLICY MAKERS. CERTAINLY ISRAEL HAS NOT WON ANY NEW SUPPORTERS IN FMG BY PERMITTING VISIT TO TAKE PLACE. IT IS LIKELY THAT VISIT STRENGTHENED THE POSITION OF THOSE WITHIN FMG WHO ARE OPPOSED TO ANY NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH TEL AVIV.

2. AS FOR IMPACT ON FMG ATTITUDES TOWARD ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP IN THE UN, WE SUSPECT PROponents OF EXPULSION WILL BE ABLE TO USE THE VISIT TO GOOD ADVANTAGE DURING ANY FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTION. THE FACT THAT THE VISIT TOOK PLACE AT ALL WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR MODERATES TO STAND UP AND MAKE A CASE FOR CONTINUED ISRAELI MEMBERSHIP. AS WAS SEEN DURING ANGOLAN CRISIS, CURRENT NIGERIAN LEADERSHIP IS LIKELY TO LOOK ON ANY DEMONSTRATION OF FRIENDSHIP FOR SOUTH AFRICA AS INIMICAL TO INTERESTS OF INDEPENDENT BLACK AFRICA AND TO REGARD SOUTH AFRICAN SUPPORT AS INHERENTLY BAD.

3. ONEATCOME OF VISIT MAY BE TO NUDGE THE FMG CLOSER TO THE MORE RADICAL ARAB POSITION. SUCH A TENDENCY WILL BE STRENGTHENED BY THE FMG'S DESIRE TO PLAY A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT. POLICY MAKERS WILL LIKELY CONCLUDE THAT SUPPORT FOR THE ARAB CAUSE IN THE MIDDLE EAST IS MORE LIKELY ENHANCE NIGERIA'S ROLE THAN IS AN EVEN HANDED APPROACH TO THE ARAB/ISRAEL CONFRONTATION. THIS WOULD CERTAINLY BE SO IF HIGH-LEVEL ISRAELIS RECIPROCATATE VISIT OR IF VORSTER VISIT RESULTS IN ARMS DEALS OR INCREASED COMMERCIAL TIES BETWEEN PRETORIA AND TEL AVIV.
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